

GLSA & WUAA SELF-SUPPORTING SUMMER FIELDWORK: 2026 UNIDENTIFIED STEAM TUG SURVEY PROJECT

Report by: Peter Kastella

Fieldwork Date: Thursday, September 10, 2026

Meeting Place: Jerry's Silo Marina

Meeting Time: Arrival 4:00 PM Departure 5:00 PM

Survey Team Members Attending: John Tindall

Volunteers Attending:

John Tindall, Joe Schuller and Peter Kastella and as divers, Rich Laiacona, Lizzy Behling and Emily Roth as ROV and surface support

Volunteers in waiting should someone cancel.

A number of volunteers were on the call list

Vessels Being Used: Sandy Ann

Objectives for the Survey:

1. Survey and draw select areas of the wreck site
2. Search for additional debris using ROV

Teams:

Team 1 John, Joe and Pete, (Objective #1)

Team 2. Rich, Lizzy and Emily (Objective #2)

Equipment Needed:

Team 1 – Survey kits

Team 2 – ROV

Future dates for the next dive: September 17

Review of the dive and findings:

Due to a conflicting work schedule, our fourth diver had to backout of the archaeology dive, but after agreeing to make up the difference in the charter cost, we were able to continue our survey of the wreck. Time is running out for this survey season, so we need to complete as much work as possible when possible. The divers were John, Joe and Pete. Rich, Lizzy and Emily operated the ROV, searching for additional debris and acting as surface support. Videos gathered by the ROV can be viewed online at <https://www.youtube.com/@wisconsinunderwaterarcheol760>. Sandy Ann crewmember Scott Bruss also dove, working on the mooring line and using his DPV to search the area around the wreck site. The conditions on Lake Michigan were favorable, surface temperatures in the mid 70s with light winds and waves less than one foot. Visibility was between 15 and 20 feet with a bottom temperature of 51 degrees. John documented the propeller and stern of the wreck. Joe worked on the boiler while Pete surveyed what may be the remains of the ship's port side gunwale rather than the keelson. The metal framework of the ship's steam engine still needs to be documented, as well as the remains between the engine, the boiler and propeller. Due to the vessel's small size, this work can be wrapped up this year, but with the sun setting earlier each week, the survey season will soon be concluding. According to CBS 58's Rebecca Schuld, sunset will be 6:57 on the 17th, 6:45 on the 24th and 6:32 on October 1. We ended the night with the "deco session" discussed the plans for the next planned dive on September 17.

The one tank dives are limited to six divers, with a minimum of five needed to pay for the charter. You can earn a guaranteed spot on a future charter if you serve as surface support for a week. Surface support does not pay a fee. Anyone interested in joining the self-supporting study should contact John to make sure there is space available. You are required to bring your own dive gear.

The Steam Tug Field Project is a GLSA & WUAA self-supporting project. Money received from divers, after paying the charter fees, is used to purchase new and replacement equipment for this and future self-supported projects on Great Lakes shipwrecks.

"Preservation Through Documentation" ©Kimm A Stabelfeldt

For those of you who have not paid your annual dues for the WUAA group or need to join the group please go to the web site and do so. <http://www.wuaa.org/wuaa/index.html>